

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-25

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R 122234Z FEB 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, UR

SUBJECT: EXCHANGES: POLITICAL ASPECTS OF BALLET EXCHANGES

REF.: MOSCOW 1254

1. DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES EMBASSY'S VIEWS RE FORMAL APPROACH TO SOVIETS ON BALLET EXCHANGES. PRIOR TO JANUARY VISIT TO MOSCOW BY CAMI OFFICIALS, DEPT. CONSIDERED WHETHER WE SHOULD MAKE APPROACH TO SOVIETS ON PANOVA/KIROV ISSUE. WE DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER, FOR TIME BEING, TO LET MATTER REMAIN ONE BETWEEN CAMI AND SOVIETS, AS SOVIETS HAVE HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME AWARE THAT FAILURE TO RESOLVE PANOVA ISSUE COULD BE HARMFUL TO OUR CULTURAL EXCHANGES.

2. THERE HAS NOT RPT NOT BEEN MUCH PUBLIC REACTION TO DATE TO POSTPONEMENT OF KIROV TOUR. HOWEVER, THERE

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1S LONG NYT ARTICLE FEBRUARY 10 BY CLIVE BARNES ON

PANOV/KIROV ISSUE. HE CONCLUDES THAT SOVIET FAILURE TO PERMIT PANOVS TO EMIGRATE COULD RESULT IN CANCELLATION OF PLISETSKAYA/BOLSHOI AND MOISEYEV TOURS THIS YEAR, AND COULD "DESTROY" CULTURAL EXCHANGES AGREEMENT (COPY OF ARTICLE BEING POUCHED TO EMBASSY/NALLE). FYI: BARNES HAS ALSO CABLED SECRETARY, ASKING HIM TO

INTERVENE WITH SOVIETS IN PANOV CASE. DEPT. IS NOW WORKING ON REPLY TO BARNES. END FYI. UNLESS OTHER ELEMENTS OF US CULTURAL WORLD PICK UP AND SUPPORT BARNES' POSITION, WE ARE INCLINED NOT TO RAISE ISSUE NOW WITH SOVIETS. THEY MIGHT WELL QUESTION WHY, IN THE ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE THAT PLISETSKOYA AND MOISEYEV TOURS ARE RUNNING INTO TROUBLE, WE ARE RAISING MATTER WITH THEM. WE REALIZE THAT, AS TIME FOR PLISETSKAYA/BOLSHOI TOUR APPROACHES, SITUATION COULD HEAT UP, PARTICULARLY IF PANOVS STILL NOT PERMITTED TO EMIGRATE AND/OR IF FEDICHEVA/FRIEDMAN CASE BECOMES PUBLIC. THEREFORE, WE WILL CONTINUE TO WATCH SITUATION CLOSELY, AND ARE PREPARED TO RECONSIDER POSSIBLE APPROACH TO SOVIETS, IF CONDITIONS WARRANT.

3. EMBASSY MAY FIND FOLLOWING INFO USEFUL AS BACKGROUND. SOME CIRCLES HERE THINK THAT AMERICAN BALLET THEATER USED PANOV CASE TO HELP CREATE ANTI-KIROV ATMOSPHERE AS RESULT OF CONTROVERSY OVER USE OF LINCOLN CENTER BY KIROV THIS SUMMER. SOME MEMBERS OF US CULTURAL COMMUNITY ALLEGEDLY THINK AMOUNT OF PUBLICITY GIVEN PANOVS IS UNWARRANTED, AND OBJECTED TO ABT'S UN-AUTHORIZED USE OF THEIR NAMES IN ANTI-KIROV CAMPAIGN.
4. TO DATE, ANTI-SOVIET FEELING IN US CULTURAL CIRCLES HAS NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED HUOK-SPONSORED TOUR OF MOISEYEV COMPANY THIS SUMMER. HUOK TELLS US HE IS NOT RPT NOT EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IN SELLING TICKETS FOR PERFORMANCES. HE CLAIMS THAT ONLY SMALL NUMBER OF HIS REGULAR CUSTOMERS HAVE REFUSED TO PURCHASE TICKETS BECAUSE OF PANOV CASE.

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